



2010 Cohort Methodology Overview

To comply with the *No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001*, Michigan moved to an accountability system in which a graduation rate includes only "on-time" graduates who earn regular diplomas within four years of entering high school. This calculation meets the guidelines provided by the National Governors Association (NGA) Graduation Counts Compact for calculation of such rates. As more and more states implement the NGA standard, state-to-state comparisons will become more meaningful.

The formula for the calculation of 2010 graduation rates is possible because school districts have been tracking the enrollment of individual students since those students first enrolled in the 9th grade in the 2006-07 school year and reporting those data to the Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI). The gathering of this information at a statewide level allows CEPI to help districts track enrollments to reflect "transfers in" and "transfers out" of the district, as well as students who exit from the public education system itself, over the course of four years.

Along with cohort four-year graduation and dropout rates, CEPI staff will also calculate cohort five-year and cohort six-year rates. The following pages list the business rules and methodology used by CEPI and the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to identify students as members of a graduation cohort and for the calculation of graduation and dropout rates:

- Ungraded Students:
 - Students reported in the educational setting "14" (special education ungraded setting) who are beyond the age of 18 will be included in cohort calculations. Schools will be held accountable for these students.
 - Students who are reported in a traditional grade, assigned to a cohort and subsequently reported in adult education (educational setting "20") will be counted as "other high school completers" if they receive their General Educational Development (GED) certificate or "off-track graduated" if they receive their high school diploma. While reported as active adult education students, they will be "off-track continuing." These students will not be assigned to a cohort if the first time they are reported is with an educational setting of "20."
- Residency Codes:
 - Students attending the Michigan School for the Deaf and Blind (code "11") will be counted in the state rates only. The following groups of students will be excluded from the cohort:
 - Under *Non-resident*:
 - a) Nonpublic school student (code "04")
 - b) Home-schooled non-resident student (code "07")
 - Under *Resident*:
 - a) Nonpublic school student (code "08")
 - b) Home-schooled resident student (code "15")
- Cohort Year:
 - Students are placed into a cohort when they are first identified as ninth graders.
 - Students reported in educational setting "14" (special education ungraded setting) are assigned to a cohort using a computed grade (age minus 6). These students will only be

- placed into a cohort if they are at least 15 years old.
 - Students who transfer into the public education system after ninth grade are placed into the appropriate cohort based on the grade in which the initial Michigan district places them.
 - Any General Collection or Student Record Maintenance Collection in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) will be used to set the cohort year.
- Accountability:
 - Accountability is determined based on the Primary Education Providing Entity (PEPE) building and district in the MSDS.
 - A student will not be included in the building-level graduation and dropout rates until the student has been reported in that building for at least two count days, based on full-time equivalency (FTE) from fall and spring counts. In the event the student has been in the building for less than two count days, the student will be included only in the district-level and state-level rates.
 - A student will not be included in the district-level graduation and dropout rates until the student is reported in that district for a least one count day, based on FTE from fall or spring counts. In the event the student has been in the district for less than one count day, the student will only be included in the state-level rates.
 - For a new student, when an accountable district/building cannot be determined (using the student's last submitted exit status and FTE), the student goes into "resolution" within the MSDS. The previously accountable district/building will be used until the state assigns the new PEPE.
 - For a new student, when an accountable district/building cannot be determined and there is no previously accountable district/building, this student goes into "resolution" and the state assigns accountability.
- Schools/Facilities who will not receive graduation and/or dropout rates:
 - An entity identified as a ninth-grade building may have a dropout rate, but will not have a completion or graduation rate.
 - An entity identified as an intermediate school district (ISD) school that does not graduate students may have a dropout rate, but will not have a completion or graduation rate.
 - Career and technical education (CTE) facilities and math/science centers are not considered accountable entities and will not receive graduation or dropout rates.
- Subgroup Determination:

A student is assigned to a subgroup based on the prior Fall or Spring General Collection reported within the MSDS. Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, a student is assigned to the supplemental nutrition eligibility subgroup if the student was reported in the Supplemental Nutrition Eligibility (SNE) Collection in the MSDS or if the student met categorical eligibility criteria (migrant, homeless or directly certified). If the student was only reported in one MSDS collection, the current PEPE record will be used. Listed below are the subgroup populations:

 - Race/ethnicity
 - Gender
 - Supplemental nutrition eligibility
 - Migrant status
 - Limited English proficiency status
 - Special education status
- Graduation/Dropout Review in the MSDS:
 - District authorized users will be able to request to modify the PEPE, cohort year and exit status of a student's record. PEPE and cohort year change requests will require approval by CEPI. Any modifications that have not been approved will not be changed.

Modifications will be limited to the following:

- District users may request a change to PEPE.
 - a) CEPI will provide the review and approval for PEPE change requests.
 - District users may request a cohort year change.
 - a) CEPI will provide the review and approval for cohort year change requests.
 - District users may submit a change to a student's exit status through the Student Record Maintenance Collection (SRM) in the MSDS.
- District users will not be able to request changes to student demographics including program participation. The following data fields cannot be changed:
 - Race/ethnicity
 - Gender
 - Supplemental nutrition eligibility
 - Migrant status
 - Limited English proficiency status
 - Special education status
 - Preliminary rates will be made available to districts based on End-of-Year (EOY) 2010 Collection data approximately two weeks after the EOY Collection closes.
- Graduation/Dropout Review and Comment Application (GAD):
 - District authorized users will be able to view their graduation and dropout rates via the GAD, including information about subgroups.
 - ISD Auditors will continue to use the GAD for the cyclical and outlier exit status audits.
 - Calculating Building/District/State Rates:
 - Buildings in which students are ordered by the court to attend are not included in the district's rate, only the building's rate.
 - A student will not be included in the building-level graduation and dropout rates until the student has been reported in that building for at least two count days, based on FTE from fall and spring collections. In the event the student has been in the building for less than two count days, the student will be included only in the district-level and state-level rates.
 - A student will not be included in the district-level graduation and dropout rates until the student is reported in that district for a least one count day, based on FTE from fall or spring collections. In the event the student has been in the district for less than one count day, the student will be included only in the state-level rates.

To calculate the cohort four-year, five-year and six-year graduation and dropout rates after transfers are accounted for, students are placed into one of five categories:

1. On-track graduated - completed high school with a regular diploma in four years or less
2. Other completer - earned a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, other certificate, or reached the special education maximum age
3. Off-track (graduated & continuing) - completed high school with a regular diploma in more than four years, or did not complete high school in four years and are still continuing in school
4. Off-track 5+(graduated & continuing) - completed high school with a regular diploma in five or more years, or did not complete high school in five years and are still continuing in school
5. Dropout - left high school permanently at any time during the cohort period, or whose

whereabouts are unknown (students with a cohort status of Missing Expected Record).

Cohort Four-Year Rates

A student is counted toward the graduation rate of the final building or district that the student attended during the four-year period. "On-track graduated" is counted as the numerator and divided by the total count of all status categories. The total of the status categories is the 2010 Cohort Total.

- The following formula is utilized for calculating the cohort four-year graduation rate:

$$\frac{\text{"On-Track Graduated"}}{2010 \text{ Cohort Total}}$$

- The following formula is utilized for calculating the cohort four-year dropout rate:

$$\frac{\text{"Dropouts"}}{2010 \text{ Cohort Total}}$$

Cohort Five-Year Rates

Cohort five-year graduation and dropout rates are calculated for students in the 2009 cohort. The five-year graduation rate is calculated in the same manner as the four-year rate, including students who graduated in the fifth year (off-track graduated) in the numerator. "On-track graduated" and "off-track graduated" are counted as the numerator and divided by the total count of all status categories (on-track graduated, off-track graduated, off-track continuing, other completer and dropout). Transfers in and out during that fifth year are accounted for as well.

- The following formula is utilized for calculating the cohort five-year graduation rate:

$$\frac{\text{"On-Track Graduated"} + \text{"Off-Track Graduated"}}{2009 \text{ Cohort Total}}$$

The five-year dropout rate is calculated in the same manner as the four-year rate, including those students who dropped out of high school in their fifth year. Transfers in and out during that fifth year are accounted for as well.

- The following formula is utilized for calculating the cohort five-year dropout rate:

$$\frac{\text{"Dropouts"}}{2009 \text{ Cohort Total}}$$

Cohort Six-Year Rates

Cohort six-year graduation and dropout rates are calculated for students in the 2008 cohort. The six-year graduation rate is calculated in the same manner as the five-year rate, including students who graduated in the sixth year (Off-track graduated) in the numerator. "On-track graduated", "off-track graduated" and "off-track 5+ graduated" are counted as the numerator and divided by the total count of all status categories (on-track graduated, off-track graduated, off-track continuing, off-track 5+ continuing, other completer and dropout). Transfers in and out during that sixth year are accounted for as well.

- The following formula is utilized for calculating the cohort six-year graduation rate:

$$\frac{\text{"On-Track Graduated"} + \text{"Off-Track Graduated"} + \text{"Off-Track 5+ Graduated"}}{2008 \text{ Cohort Total}}$$

The six-year dropout rate is calculated in the same manner as the five-year rate, including those students who dropped out of high school in their sixth year. Transfers in and out during that sixth year are accounted for as well.

- The following formula is utilized for calculating the cohort six-year dropout rate:

$$\frac{\text{"Dropouts"}}{2008 \text{ Cohort Total}}$$

A detailed list of cohort status categories and MSDS exit codes are available in the MSDS User Manual.